1: Herskovits E-4, 8 (1934) 1397 SV3 Haiti SV3 Mirebalais

not come, the mother goes to a woman specialist who knows the herbs which are believed to induce the flow. When the mother is ill or tubercular, the infant is given to a wet-nurse. Once he has begun to nurse, he is fed whenever he cries, and as soon as he can sit up he is given the same food as the mother eats. For the first two or three months after the birth of her child a woman refrains from eating egg-plant, fresh fish — although she may eat salt fish — white beans or any others larger than Congo peas, pork, lard, and all fruit. The ears of a female child are pierced when she is about a month old for the gold ear-rings which are worn by girls and women of all ages. If the parents cannot afford them at the time, however, thread is placed in the holes until a sum sufficient to provide this important trinket has been accumulated.

A child is taught to sit up beginning with the end of the third or fourth month, and by the time he is six or seven months old he can sit quite well; girls are believed to be more precocious than boys in acquiring this skill. When about ten months old, or sooner, an older sister, a little girl, or the father or mother takes the child by the hand and teaches him to walk, later allowing him to hold one end of a stick for support. A child is never left alone, for fear of the evil eye or of werewolves, so that a mother does not even cross the threshold of her house without taking her baby with her; while if for some reason she cannot avoid leaving her child while she is in the yard, an empty bottle is placed near its pillow as a protective device. Teething is a matter of importance, since the attitudes of the parents toward a child may be determined by the first teeth to appear. If these are cut in the upper jaw, it is said that the child's mother will survive his father, and when this occurs, the mother takes every precaution to conceal the fact from her husband, so he will not hate the child. Others hold, however, that the appearance of an upper tooth first denotes that either the father or the mother is soon to die.[6]

Instruction starts early in the life of a child. Beginning with

1: Herskovits E-4, 5 (1934) 1937 SV3 Haiti SV3
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his fourth or fifth month, he is reprimanded for laziness if late in sitting up, and when he is taught to walk his parents call out: "Come, lazy one! Come on!" He receives no physical punishment, however, until somewhat older. Thus, for example, if after a child can crawl he is told not to go beyond the threshold, he is scolded the first two or three times he disobeys, but after this he is beaten with a small stick on the buttocks or thighs. Similar means are used to teach him at the same age not to go near the fire, to avoid the thorny cacti used to fence gardens, not to put things in his mouth, and — especially because of black magic — not to pick up anything from the ground. Training for bowel and bladder control is begun shortly after birth and is continued at every opportunity the mother may have to pick up the child, so that he is usually fairly well trained when a year old, though complete control is achieved only after two years or more. A child who wets his mat is beaten, but "not too hard."

Baptism takes place when all is in readiness for the ceremony, a matter of a month or two after birth, unless the child is seriously ill, in which case he is baptized immediately. The fee of 2.50 gourdes to the civil officer who registers the birth is paid by the father. The godfather pays a similar amount to the priest for baptizing the infant, and in addition, if he desires and is able, he may both aid the godmother in meeting the expenses of dressing the child and give the mother a gift. The godmother furnishes the child with a shirt, a dress, a bonnet — "a pretty one" — stockings, shoes, and, if she can afford it, silk for a ribbon-trimmed coverlet. These gifts are obligatory, and even where a hasty baptism of a sick child has made it impossible to provide properly for his outfitting, if he survives, his mother is given a present of money by both godparents so she can procure this finery.

As in most Catholic countries, the godparents play an important role in the life of their godchild. Not only do they "stand in the place of father and mother" at his baptism, but

L: Herskovits E-4, 5 (1934) 1937 SV3 Haiti SV3 Mirebalais

857 hide-and-seek and enjoy story-telling sessions, when the tales of 'Ti Malice and Bouki are recounted. Still older ones make drums out of jars and "arrange a dance." Little girls play with dolls made for them by the older children, while boys with sticks for horses organize themselves into "armies" with their
852 seniors as officers. When a child's teeth fall out, a minor ceremony is performed. As each tooth is detached, the child throws it on the roof of the mother's house, saying:

[539] "*Rat, rat, rat,*
M'jet' yun bel' 'ti dent
ba 'ou,
Ba'm yun vieille dent."

"Rat, rat, rat,
I give you a nice little tooth,
Give me an old tooth."

871 At this same time a beginning of formal education is made, especially if the child lives in the town or near enough to it to
872 allow him to reach one of the schools there. These schools are under both secular and Catholic auspices, and in them the pupil is instructed in the rudiments of European education, learning to read and write and to do simple problems in arith-
893 metic. If he shows proficiency and the means of his family permit, he may go on to a secondary school at Port-au-Prince or some other center; in the main, however, this schooling is all he ever receives, if he is permitted this much.

861 593 602 It is not to be supposed that a child is allowed to grow up without learning how to conduct himself in accordance with the traditional code of Haitian behavior, for the punishment that follows departures from this code is always both prompt and extremely painful, beating with sticks being the mode of correction most often employed. The mechanisms of education and control operate the more effectively because they are exercised by a fairly large group of persons, which includes not only the father and mother of the child, but also his grandparents, his uncles and aunts on both sides of the family, and
603 593 604 his older brothers, sisters, and cousins. Less restraint is exercised before grandparents than other relations, for while there

3: Herskovits E-4, 8 (1834) 1937 SV3 Haiti SV3
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fact that a family will often strike out for itself, deserting the parental home, show a European independence foreign to native African thought. Yet the arrangement of meal-times, and the fact that a wife rarely eats with her husband, are African, as are the modes of correction, especially the feeling that flogging with a stick is the best disciplinary method. Indeed, the characteristic snap of the fingers employed by the Haitian to indicate a beating is exactly that which is used in Dahomey to signify beheading! In the attitude toward children African traditions have been warped by European custom, which has introduced a certain hardness of feeling that, whatever the cost, children must be brought in line with social convention, together with a resulting harshness of treatment that is anything but African.

Another important facet of Haitian life in which the effect of contact is telling includes art and recreational activities. Perhaps because of the conditions of slavery, or the difficulties of life after independence had been attained, much of these forms of African tradition has been lost, not to be replaced by corresponding borrowings from European sources. Woodcarving, an outstanding element in the æsthetic life of West Africa, is almost entirely absent. Near Mirebalais lives a man who can carve a pipe in the likeness of a human face, but there is no similarity between the products of his craft and West African figurines or masks, and he is thought of as an unusual person whose carving is an interesting but not socially significant avocation. It was stated, though without adequate corroboration, that before the Marine occupation Mirebalais boasted *vodun* drums on which heads "like the ones on these pipes" had been carved. Today the only form of decorative work in wood to be seen is the scroll-work designs which act as ventilating devices over doorways. They are done with the jigsaws of the carpenters, and no fertility of conception or felicity in composition marks these artistically crude efforts.

Other African crafts, which, though essentially utilitarian

3: Leyburn Z-4, 5 (no date) 1966
SV3 Haiti SV3

Parents are generally kind to their children, so far as physical
855 punishment is concerned. The average peasant child can hardly
861 properly be said to be "brought up": he merely grows, eats whatever
152 his family eats or whatever fruits he can pick up, and learns his place in the community as he matures. In anger, parents are likely to use in correction the first thing that comes to hand. There is a surprising callousness to pain among these generally kindly people: they beat their donkeys unmercifully, and strap harness over open sores; they carry chickens, head down and feet tied together and mouths gaping, for miles in the sun; they revel in gory cockfights. If, therefore, a parent is minded to beat his child, he will probably do a thorough
[578] job of it. A peasant woman, pommeling her son with a broomstick, replied to the protests of a white passer-by, "*Li nègue; li pas fait li mal.*" ("He's a Negro; it won't hurt him.") The interference of a stranger in the beating of a wife by her man, armed with a club, was resented by both man and woman as an interference with a purely family quarrel.

831 The concept of sexual continence is lacking among the peasants.
834 Sex, indeed, hardly enters the realm of morality except in connection
84 with adulterous dalliance of one man with another's woman. There is no virtue in abstaining from sex relations when the sexual urge is strong. Mothers tell love stories in all their frank details to their young daughters, and some who care about such matters are adept in all lore connected with stimulating and satisfying a man's desire.[5]
[342] Since huts are small and the whole family sleeps in the same room, children have ample opportunity to observe the sexual life of their parents. If a girl, as a result of her own experiments, has a child born to her, there is no disgrace. Practically every peasant is "illegitimate," so that the term means nothing; a baby will soon be old enough to assist in the work of the home, thus becoming an asset. It is expected that as soon as a youth grows up he will find a mate and begin a family of his own.

241 The family is as important an element of peasant life as formal
431 marriage is unimportant. It is the economic unit. Ever since the days
593 of Pétion Haitian economy has been one of small things: even the crops are small subsistence crops of maize, millet, beans, rice, yams, and frequently trees of bananas, plantains, and coffee, which require no particular cultivation. Enough coffee has been produced in Haiti for annual export ever since 1804, but until recent years the beans

5. See Zora Neale Hurston, *Tell My Horse*, pp. 22 ff.